

# MEDIA RELEASE

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Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals \$ Lucas State Office Building \$ Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0083

## **For Immediate Release**

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**Contact:** David Werning  
**Phone:** (515) 281-7376

### **Iowa Nursing Homes and DIA Partner in Unique Quality Initiative**

DES MOINES, Iowa – Twenty nursing facilities across the state are partnering with the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) in an initiative designed to enhance the quality of care provided to their residents.

DIA Director Steve Young today announced the State Quality Improvement Partnership (SQIP), noting the initiative is designed to assist nursing homes focus on quality enhancement with the assistance of the Department's Health Facilities Division. "The SQIP program is the first of its kind in the nation, focusing state attention on quality improvement measures. The program runs concurrent with and independent of the Department's primary regulatory role," Director Young added.

Each of the nursing homes participating in the SQIP program were contacted by DIA staff and offered an opportunity to partner with the Department on facility-identified issues relating to resident care and quality of life. "The participating facilities will identify the quality initiatives they want to pursue and then develop a plan of expectation with stated, definable goals related to those quality initiatives," the Director explained.

"The Department's responsibility for regulatory oversight of Iowa nursing homes will not be diminished by this quality initiative," Young said.

"The participating nursing homes are aware that the responsibility of the Health Facilities Division is to monitor compliance as part of its regulatory role – that responsibility will run concurrent with the SQIP initiative," he added. "Outside of this regulatory responsibility, senior supervisory staff will be there to help these facilities enhance the quality of care and services provided to their residents."

"State and federal rules realistically prevent the Department from acting as a consultant to

nursing homes during annual compliance surveys and complaint investigations. DIA's role is limited to regulatory oversight and enforcement," Young said. "However, the implementation of the SQIP program now allows Health Facilities Division supervisory personnel to step outside their traditional regulatory oversight to assist nursing homes in addressing quality issues affecting resident care." If a facility has identified training issues as an area needing improvement, DIA staff will assist it by making referrals to the state's quality improvement organization – the Iowa Foundation for Medical Care (IFMC).

"IFMC is pleased to partner with the Department and on these activities," said Kim Downs, IFMC. "Nursing homes have been working hard to improve quality of care under the national Nursing Home Quality Initiative," Downs added. "Recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) data show nursing home residents are benefiting from these efforts. The Department's SQIP program adds a new dimension to the federal initiatives and underscores the importance of nursing homes actively engaging in quality improvement efforts."

The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA), Iowa's largest long-term care trade association whose member facilities provide quality care daily to 22,000 of Iowa's seniors, applauds the Department's State Quality Improvement Partnership. "We are very appreciative of Director Steve Young's efforts and commitment to help long-term facilities meet their goal of providing the highest level of quality care to residents through the Quality Improvement Partnership," said Steve Ackerson, IHCA Executive Director. "This is a refreshing approach by the DIA to work along side individual long-term care providers to enhance their quality and expand services to Iowa's seniors." IHCA and its 500 member facilities are committed to quality care and strongly support not only DIA's Quality Improvement Partnership, but have also signed as participants in CMS' Action Plan for Quality and the long-term care profession's nationwide Quality First initiative.

Additionally, an administrator of one of the SQIP participating facilities has already contacted the Department to embrace his partnership with DIA. "We strongly believe that this new initiative with our facility, the Department, and the IFMC working together outside of the regulatory arena, is a positive first step for all participants, especially our residents," the administrator said. "We look forward to working with all the partners on our common goal of providing quality care and quality of life to our residents."

The Department of Inspections and Appeals is embarking on a unique opportunity through its SQIP program to make a difference in the quality of care, quality of life, and quality of service provided to nursing home residents, Director Young said, adding, "While the Department has always endorsed quality improvement, it is not given much, if any, latitude to serve in a consulting role under federal regulatory guidelines. We now assume this new role with great hope for and appreciation to those facilities that have embraced this unique opportunity."

**Editor's Note:** The names and locations of the 20 Iowa nursing facilities partnering with the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) in its SQIP program are listed below.

### **DIA's SQIP Partners**

Regency Care Center  
Norwalk, IA

CLC Polk City  
Polk City, IA

Rosebush Gardens Health Center  
Burlington, IA

USA Healthcare Mason City  
Mason City, IA

The Ottumwa Manor  
Ottumwa, IA

Siouxland Nursing & Rehab Center  
Sioux City, IA

Pleasant Care Living Center  
Pleasantville, IA

Morningside Nursing & Rehab Center  
Sioux City, IA

Heritage Manor  
Newton, IA

USA Healthcare Center-Urbandale  
Urbandale, IA

Careage of Newton  
Newton, IA

CLC University  
Des Moines, IA

USA Healthcare Fort Dodge  
Fort Dodge, IA

Meadow Lawn Health Care  
Davenport, IA

Baxter Health Care Center  
Baxter, IA

Fejervary Health Care Center  
Davenport, IA

Genesis Senior Living Center  
Des Moines, IA

St. Francis Manor  
Grinnell, IA

The Abington on Grand  
Ames, IA

Stonehill Care Center  
Dubuque, IA